

VLR - 4/17/90
NRHP - 12/28/90United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name CASA MARIA
other names/site number DHR file 02-829

2. Location

street & number Route 691 N/A not for publication
city, town Greenwood ☒ vicinity
state Virginia code VA county Albemarle code 003 zip code 22943

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>10</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<u>7</u>	<u>2</u> structures
<u>5</u>	<u>2</u> objects
<u>22</u>	<u>4</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/ANumber of contributing resources previously
listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this
☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the
National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official

Date

Department of Historic Resources, 221 Governor Street, Richmond, Va.

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined eligible for the National
Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register.
- ☐ removed from the National Register.
- ☐ other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic- Single Dwelling

Domestic- Secondary structures

Recreation and Culture- outdoor recreation

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic- Single Dwelling

Domestic- Secondary structures

Recreation and Culture-outdoor recreat:

Recreation and Culture- Work of art

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Stucco and brick (main house)

Stucco, frame, stone (outbuildings)

roof Terra cotta

other Brick foundation, ceramic tile roof

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

SUMMARY ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Casa Maria is an estate of approximately thirty acres located on the west side of Route 691 near Greenwood in western Albemarle County. The house consists of two perpendicular stucco wings built in 1921-1922 in the Spanish-Mediterranean style with a two-story brick addition that dates from 1928. Part of the main house is covered by a low-pitched hipped roof, while the rest has a low roof hidden by a parapet. An arcade runs along two-thirds of the west front. Exterior detailing consists of louvered shutters, stucco string courses, and recessed panels at the parapets. The interior consists of a wide center hall flanked by a living room and dining room on either side. The original paneled woodwork, marble fireplaces, and double stair are notable. The east wing contains service rooms and bedrooms. The 1928 addition contains a music room with exposed ceiling beams. Also on the property are two Spanish-style stuccoed servant's quarters with decorative metal grilles and tile roofs, and several smaller outbuildings. The gardens, designed by Charles F. Gillette, are extensive and in excellent condition. They consist of boxwood allees, azalea gardens, winding rock wall and terrace and numerous specimen trees. At the west end of the garden are a stone storage shed, barbeque, and several garden structures.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Casa Maria is an estate of approximately thirty acres located on the west side of Route 691 near Greenwood in western Albemarle County. The surrounding area is characterized by large farms and estates and is overwhelmingly rural. The estate's eastern boundary is defined by a continuous stone wall along Route 691. The entrance is marked by an iron gate between two stone piers with the name CASA MARIA on bronze plaques on either side. The residence is at the end of a short circular drive.

Casa Maria consists of two perpendicular stucco wings built in 1921-1922 with a two-story brick addition that dates from 1928. The older portion of the house is two-and-one-half stories tall with French doors on the first story, six-over-six or eight-over-eight sash windows with louvered shutters on the second story and recessed rectangular panels above a ledge on the attic level. The entrance facade is on the west and is arcaded for two-thirds of the length of the first story. The middle three bays are brought forward as a pavilion and here the arcade is supported on square piers with caps. Each arch is topped by a keystone

☒ See continuation sheet

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1919 - 1928

Significant Dates

1922

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Significant Person

Architect/Builder

Main house and outbuildings attributed to Charles F. Gillette; William L. Bottomley (1928

addition); Charles F. Gillette (gardens).

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Casa Maria is significant for its association with Charles F. Gillette, one of the premier landscape architects practicing in Virginia during the first half of the twentieth century. The gardens at Casa Maria are the most elaborate and best maintained of his numerous commissions in Albemarle County and are notable for their extensive stone walls, walks, and ancillary buildings, as well as the numerous rare specimen trees. From long tradition, the design of the Spanish-Mediterranean style house built 1920-1922 is also attributed to Gillette. If true, it is the only known example of his architectural work in Virginia. The use of the Mediterranean style is in itself remarkable; Casa Maria is the only major example of this style in Albemarle County. In addition, the music room wing was designed by the architect William Lawrence Bottomley for its second owner, Ella Williams Smith, in 1928. Bottomley, well-known for his country house commissions in Virginia, worked on only two other houses in Albemarle County: Rose Hill (1930-1931) and Blue Ridge Farm (1923-1927), both in Greenwood.

HISTORY:

Casa Maria stands on part of the original Rose Hill tract bought by Susan Bueck Massie in 1903.¹ Mrs. Massie built the first Rose Hill, a large two-and-one-half-story, hipped-roof, frame house with front portico in 1904. It was used by her family as a summer home until it burned in 1930. In 1919 she gave nearly ten acres of land adjacent to her house and fronting on Route 691 to her sister Mary Williams.² Construction of Casa Maria and its gardens was begun shortly thereafter. Mrs. Williams died in 1920 before the house was finished, but work was completed in 1922 by Mrs. Massie's daughter Ella Williams Smith and her husband Gordon.³ It was they who asked William Lawrence Bottomley to design the small two-story south wing in 1928. In 1930 Rose Hill burned and was immediately rebuilt according to designs by Bottomley, with gardens by Charles F. Gillette. The cottages at Casa Maria evidently had been built by that time, as Mrs. Massie lived in one of them while supervising the construction of Rose Hill.

☒ See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Albemarle County Land Records, Charlottesville, Virginia

Smith, Ella Williams. Tears and Laughter in Central Virginia and Elsewhere.

Verona, Virginia: McClure Press, 1972.

O'Neal, William Bainter and Christopher H.C. Weeks. The Work of William Lawrence Bottomley in Richmond. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1984.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

☐ See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State historic preservation office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Specify repository:

Department of Historic Resources
221 Governor St. Richmond, Va.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Approximately 6.5 acres

UTM References

A 17 697160 4211520
Zone Easting Northing

C

B
Zone Easting Northing

D

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of Casa Maria are shown as the solid black line on the accompanying plat dated August 13, 1920 contained in deed book 174, page 243. (Albemarle County Land Records, Charlottesville, Virginia.)

☐ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the nominated property include the land deeded to Mary Williams by her sister Susan Massie for the construction of Casa Maria. The boundaries include the main house, outbuildings and the extensive landscaping created by the landscape gardener Charles f. Gillette.

☐ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Geoffrey B. Henry

organization _____

street & number 1515 Rutledge Avenue

city or town Charlottesville

date _____

telephone 804-293-8006

state Va.

zip code 22903

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and two parallel brick string courses run between the first and second stories. Two tile panels with a design of flowers in a vase are set into the wall between the first and third bays from the left on the west facade. On the north facade there is a slightly projecting window bay with tall ten-pane casement windows. A glazed ceramic tile with the name Casa Maria is set into the wall to the right of this bay. The east facade is distinguished by a center entrance below a balcony and an arched window with fanlight flanked by narrow two-over-two sash windows.

The east wing is seven bays long and is similar to the north wing except that it is not arcaded. There are four round-arched windows on the second story of the north facade and a recessed entrance on the south facade.

An enclosed garden with stuccoed walls, arched entrances, and brick paving is located in the angle of the two wings. A four-bay, one-story brick hyphen connects the original house with the later wing. Each bay is marked by round-arched French doors with fanlights. The two-story, three-bay, hipped-roof brick wing has French doors, eight-over-eight sash windows and a double brick belt course. The windows are topped with brick jack-arches and a keystone. There is a projecting bay at the southwest corner with a round-arched French door with fanlight.

As with the exterior, the interior is unaltered and in excellent condition. The center stair hall is flanked by a living room and bedroom on the left and a sitting room, dining room, and music room on the right. The master bedrooms are located on the second floor. The east wing contains the service rooms with a kitchen, pantry, and small dining room on the first floor and smaller bedrooms and a study on the second floor.

The stair hall is fully paneled in a dark wood with mirror panels above the doors. The wide stair rises in two stages and forks at the first landing. It features a molded handrail, a turned and fluted newel, and a balustrade of tall, vertical ovals topped with small ovals.

The living room is fully paneled and has built-in, full-length bookcases on the east wall. The fireplace is flanked by fluted pilasters and has a paneled frieze and molded mantel shelf. The dining room is also fully paneled in a dark wood with a chairrail. There is a paneled over-mantel above the carved marble fireplace. The marble is of European origin, probably Italian. The music room, in the 1928 wing, is Mediterranean in style with exposed ceiling beams, a tile floor and simple fireplace mantel.

There are several outbuildings on the property, most dating from the 1921-1922 building period. To the south west of the house are two stuccoed cottages, one a residence, the other a residence/garage. The two-and-one-half-story, three-bay residence has six-over-six sash

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with louvered shutters. It has a hipped roof with Spanish tiles and there is a small tiled hood over the center door. The other building has a three-bay garage on the basement level and a residence on the first floor. It too has a paneled attic level with eye-brow windows sealed with louvered shutters. Steps on the north lead to a balustraded portico with a flat roof supported by square piers. A contributing concrete block shed is nestled into the hill between the two guest cottages.

To the east of the main house are two small, contributing frame buildings; the first is a one-bay, gable-roofed cottage with shingle siding; the other is a one-story, gable-roofed cottage with gable-end entrance, six-over-six sash, and louvered shutters. Next to this building is an original, contributing structure--a cold frame and cutting garden area framed in concrete. Two smaller, contributing frame sheds, presumably garages, also flank the driveway.

The stone terrace designed by Gillette extends from the west facade of the house. It leads to a large grass panel framed by boxwoods and evergreens. Two modern, non-contributing sculptures have been set in concrete on this panel by the current owner. Beside this panel is another, more informal garden area, with a stone fish pond which is connected to a dry-laid stone wall. The stone wall, which winds its way around the edge of the property and through the gardens, is an original, contributing structural element of the landscaping. Beyond this informal garden is a more formal series of grass panels and rose gardens encircled by azaleas, boxwood, and rhododendrons. There are also numerous stands of specimen trees, some quite rare. Within this area is an original garden gazebo, one of the contributing structures within the garden. A central allee of boxwoods leads from the grassy panel to a lake, which was added by the present owner.

A small, non-contributing arched bridge, added with the lake, crosses over to the western part of the garden, and on a slight elevation overlooking the opposite shore is a new, non-contributing gazebo. Further west, set within a wooded dell, are two, contributing, stone, gable-roofed structures, one a small hut and the other a barbeque grill. Both have terra-cotta tile roofs. Placed with these are two more contributing objects, a stone pedestal used as a work table next to the barbeque, and a massive stone and concrete slab picnic table. Near this area is a small stone canal that branches off the stream and leads, about ten feet away, to a small arched niche with a statue inside. Three old stone benches are placed along the path that runs beside the stream, completing the picturesque arrangement within the dell.

To the south of the house is a new, non-contributing swimming pool overlooking the hill that leads down to the pond. Northwest of the house, almost completely out-of-sight of the formal gardens, is a large, frame, gable-roofed barn, part of the original estate.

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CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

Buildings.: House
Cottages (2)
Sheds (6)
Barn

Structures: Cold frame
Barbeque
Aqueduct
Bridge
Gazebo
Pool
Stone Wall

Objects: Benches (3)
Picnic Table
Stone slab pedestal

NON-CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

Structures: Gazebo
Pool

Objects: Sculptures (2)

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Traditionally, the design of both the house and gardens at Casa Maria has been attributed to Charles F. Gillette, of Richmond, the premier landscape architect practicing in Virginia in the first half of the twentieth century. If true, it would be the only known example of his architectural work in Virginia, if not the country. Certainly the gardens, quite elaborate and still excellently maintained, were the work of this talented landscape architect. Gillette executed numerous landscape commissions in central Virginia during the 1920s and 1930s including Blue Ridge Farm, Rose Hill, Gallison Hall, Belvoir, Verulam, and Lochiel. With the possible exception of Rose Hill, the gardens at Casa Maria are the most extensive and visually interesting of these and are most closely maintained today according to his original designs.

It is said that Gillette designed the house at Casa Maria as a favor to the Williams sisters, both of whom were close personal friends of his. Their personal and professional paths crossed frequently during this period and it is natural that Gillette should become closely involved in the overall planning of Casa Maria. Surely they knew of his work at Blue Ridge Farm, immediately adjacent to Rose Hill, begun in 1920, where Gillette and Bottomley created a masterful interpretation of the Georgian Revival style. Their brother Thomas Williams was one of the original developers of Windsor Farms near Richmond in the 1920s, during which time he engaged both Bottomley and Gillette. In 1927 he arranged for the dismantling and shipment of Agecroft Hall from England to Richmond with Gillette retained as landscape designer. Mrs. Massie also undoubtedly knew Gillette from her years as an active member of the Virginia Federation of Garden Clubs, of which she was president between 1926 and 1928. In 1930 she asked Bottomley to design a new Rose Hill after the house was destroyed by fire and Gillette was again called in as landscape architect.

Unfortunately, the architectural drawings for Casa Maria were lost in a fire at Gillette's office and no other correspondence, drawings, or building records can be found to substantiate the claim for Gillette as architect-designer. Nevertheless, the strong oral tradition of his involvement at Casa Maria is substantiated by Ella Smith (the original owner) and her daughter Mrs. James McGuire, several local architects practicing at that time and a few surviving neighbors. Finally, the choice of the unusual Spanish-Mediterranean style suggests that a conventional country house architect was not used. Gillette often incorporated Mediterranean themes in his landscape designs.

The involvement of Bottomley at Casa Maria is also significant as it was one of only three houses with which he was involved in Albemarle County. Essentially Georgian in style, the addition is distinctly different from the rest of the house, although the two are now tied together by their yellow paint color. The Mediterranean interior is more closely related to the rest of the house and represents an unusual stylistic departure for Bottomley. It closely approximates the conservatory at Nordley, designed by Bottomley in the 1920s, particularly in its use of exposed wood ceiling beams.

Casa Maria was the home of Ella Smith for nearly fifty years and was bought by the present owner in 1970. Alterations to the house have been few; the only major change was the creation of a pond and arched bridge at the end of the boxwood allee.

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References --

- 1- Albemarle County Deed Book 126, page 496.
- 2- Deed Book 174, page 243.
- 3- Deed Book 187, page 167.
- 4- Ella Williams Smith, Tears and Laughter in Central Virginia and Elsewhere.
(Verona, Virginia: McClure Press), page 121.
- 5- Interview with Mrs. Cynthia Tremblay, Casa Maria, Greenwood, Virginia.
June 20, 1989.
- 6- Ella Williams Smith, op. cit. , page 142.

Sue W. Massie (SEAL)

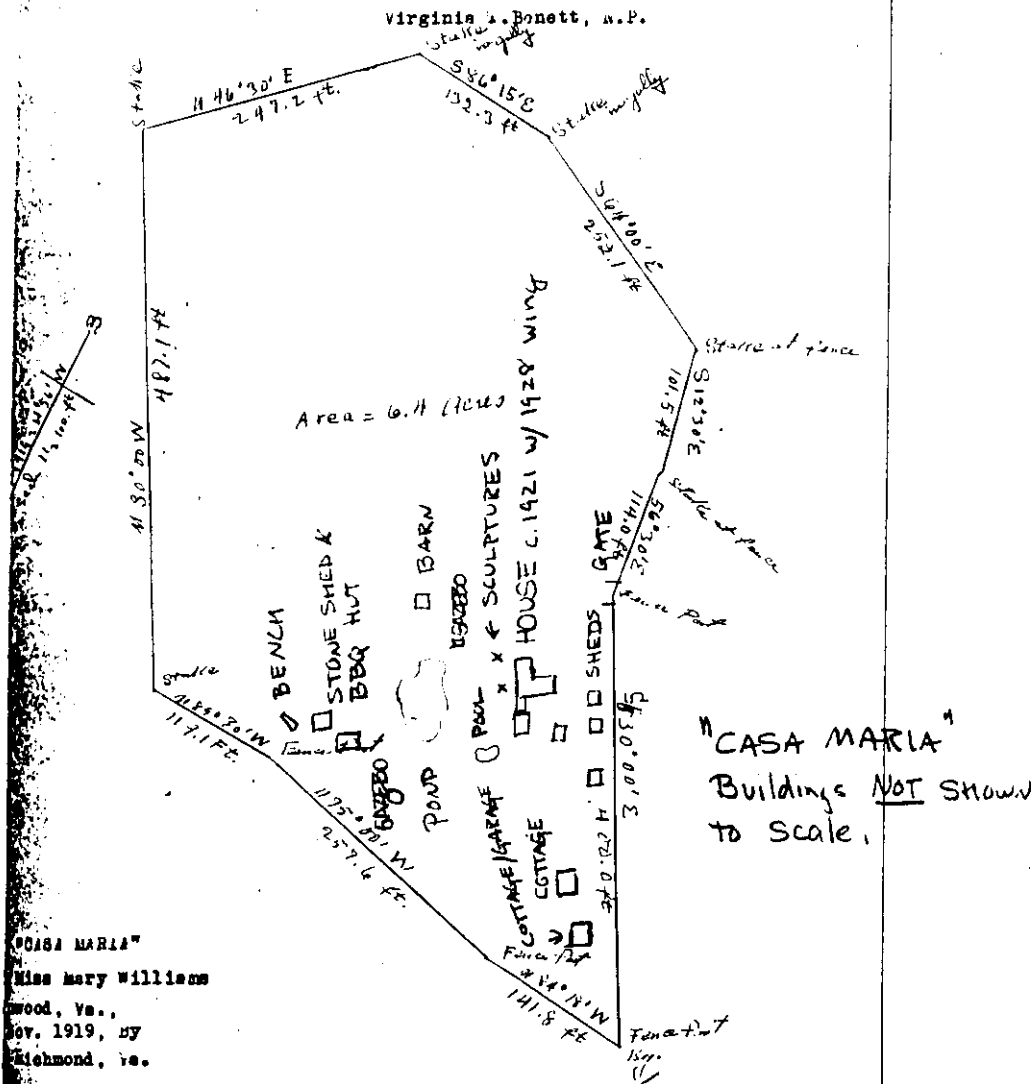
VIRGINIA

COMMONWEALTH:

I, Virginia L. Bennett, a Notary Public in and for the City of
in the State of Virginia, do certify that Sue W. Massie, whose name is signed to
this writing bearing date on the 5th day of August 1920, has acknowledged the
same in my City aforesaid.

Given under my hand this 13 day of August 1920.

My commission expires on Nov. 19 1923.



at the N.E. corner of the lawn which surrounds the residence of Mrs. W.N.
then running N 84° 18' W 141.8 ft. along the fence line to a fence post, thence
W 257.6 ft. to a fence post, thence N 89° 30' W 119.1 ft to a stake, thence
W 487.1 ft to a stake, thence N 46° 30' E 247.2 ft. to a stake in gully
S 86° 15' E 132.3 ft. to a stake, in gully, thence S 64° 00' E 252.1 ft to a
fence along road to Greenwood, thence S 12° 30' E 101.5 ft to a another stake
thence S 30° 00' E 114 ft to fence post, thence S 30° 00' E 400 ft along
the the point of beginning.

described tract contains 6.4 acres.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

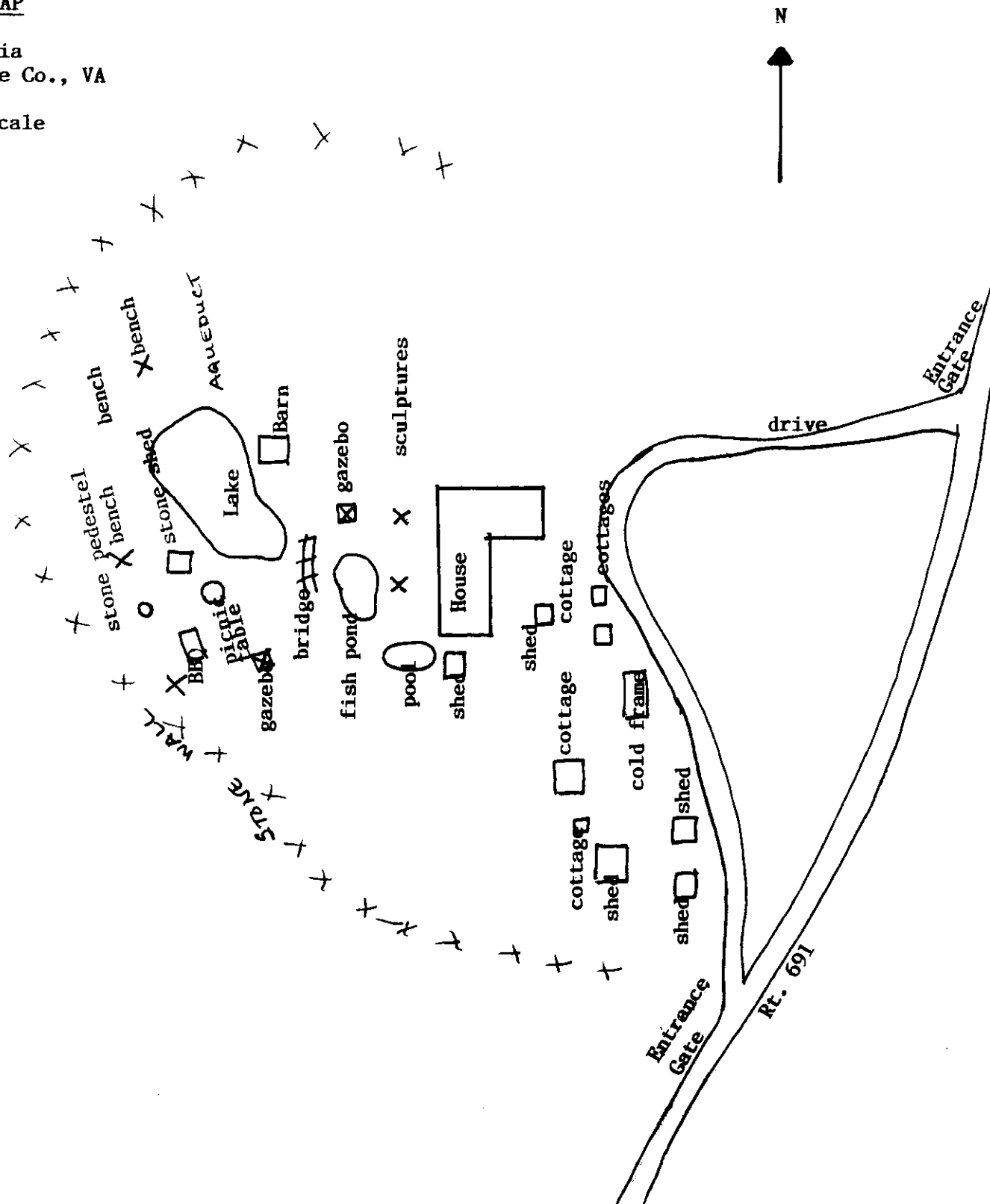
National Register of Historic Places
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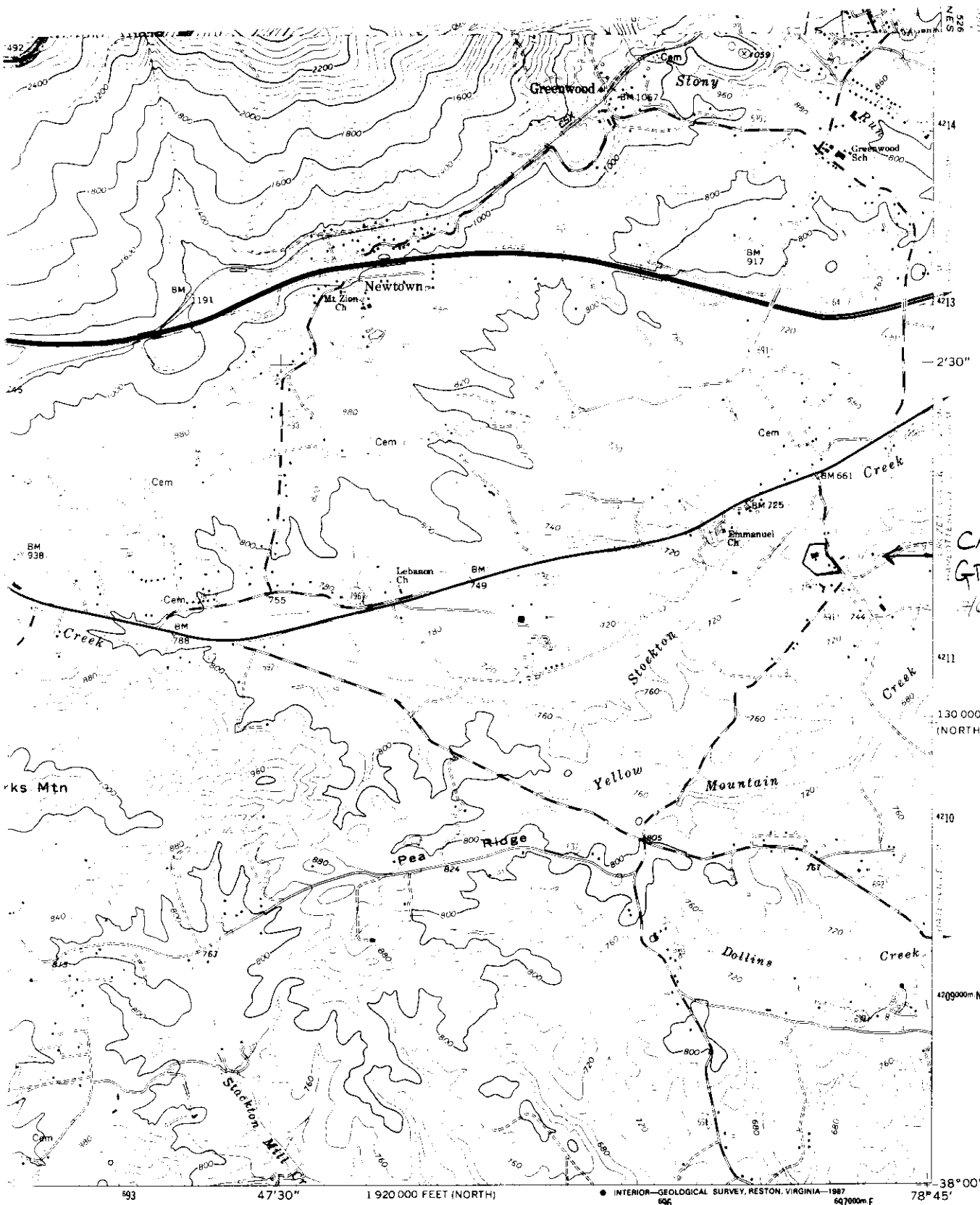
Section number _____ Page _____

SKETCH MAP

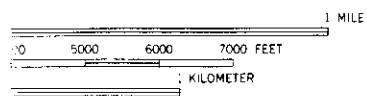
Casa Maria
Albemarle Co., VA

Not to scale





CASA MARIA
GREENWOOD, VA
7/07/100/42115.20



0 FEET
DOT CONTOURS
SUM OF 1929



ACCURACY STANDARDS
ADO 80225 OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092.
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903
ABOL IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled in cooperation with Commonwealth of Virginia agencies from aerial photographs taken 1984 and other sources. This information not field checked Map edited 1987

ROAD CLASSIFICATION	
Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road
Interstate Route	U. S. Route
	State Route

WAYNESBORO EAST, VA.
38078-A7-TF-024

1973
PHOTOREVISED 1987
DMA 5260 III SE-SERIES V834